

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 EC BRU 06805 232035Z

70

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-14 ISO-00 ARA-16 EA-11 NEA-10 RSC-01

AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 INR-10

NSAE-00 CIEP-02 SPC-03 STR-08 TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01

OMB-01 AGR-20 OIC-04 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10

PA-04 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /261 W

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R 231846Z NOV 73

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6063

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 EC BRU 06805 232035Z

CONFIDENTIAL EC BRUSSELS 6805

E.O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: EEC, US, GATT, XA, ETRD

SUBJ: AFRICAN FRANCOPHONE-FRENCH SUMMIT

CONFERENCE -- REVERSE PREFERENCES ARE GOOD FOR YOU*

REF: PARIS 30000 (NOTAL)

1. WE HAVE READ WITH CONSIDERABLE INTEREST PARAGRAPH THREE OF THE REFTEL SUMMARIZING THE ARGUMENTS FRENCH STATE SECRETARY DENIAU MADE TO THE FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN LEADERS IN PRESSING THEM TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION AND TO SUPPORT RETENTION OF REVERSE PREFERENCES IN THE NEW EC-AFRICAN ARRANGEMENTS CURRENTLY BEING NEGOTIATED. IN ESSENCE, DENIAU APPEARS TO BE TELLING THE FRANCO-PHONES THAT RESERVE PREFERENCES DO NOT DAMAGE LDC INTERESTS BUT THAT THEY RISK LOSING BOTH THEIR COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGES AND EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (FED) ASSISTANCE IF THEY MAINTAIN THEIR OPPOSITION TO REVERSE PREFERENCES AS PART OF THE PRESENT OVERALL AFRICAN POSITION.
2. WHILE IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT IS STILL PRESSING FOR RETENTION OF REVERSE PREFERENCES, DENIAU SEEMS TO BE REVERTING TO EARLIER STRAIGHTFORWARD "BLACKMAIL" TACTICS. ADDRESSEES WILL RECALL THAT FOR SEVERAL YEARS DENIAU, IN HIS CAPACITY AS AN EC COMMISSION MEMBER, ALWAYS STOUTLY DENIED THAT THE COMMUNITY WAS EXERCISING PRESSURE ON THE AFRICANS. THE ARGUMENTS WERE ALWAYS POSED IN TERMS OF: (A) THE AFRICANS WANT TO GIVE REVERSE PREFERENCES AS A MATTER OF "DIGNITY" AND TO HAVE A BARGAINING COUNTER IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EUROPEANS; (B) REVERSE PREFERENCES ARE NECESSARY TO MAKE ANY EC-AFRICAN ARRANGEMENT "GATTABLE"; (C) AFRICANS ARE IN ANY CASE FREE TO GENERALIZE TO THIRD COUNTRIES ANY PREFERENCES THEY GIVE THE COMMUNITY; AND (D) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IS NOT TIED TO THE GRANTING OF REVERSE PREFERENCES.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 EC BRU 06805 232035Z

3. NUANCED ARGUMENTS SUCH AS THE FOREGOING (MANY OF WHICH WE HAVE ALWAYS CONSIDERED TO BE MORE SOPHISTRY THAN SUBSTANCE) ARE NOW APPARENTLY BEING SUBORDINATED TO THINLY-VEILED THREATS AS THE FRENCH STEP UP THEIR CAMPAIGN TO BREAK THE COMMON AFRICAN FRONT AGAINST REVERSE PREFERENCES OR "RECIPROCITY" IN CURRENT EUROPEAN COMMUNITY JARGON. THE EC COMMISSION STILL FAVORS RECIPROCITY AS PART OF A SO-CALLED FREE TRADE AREA APPROACH, BUT THEY ARE NOT TO

OUR KNOWLEDGE USING ARGUMENTS LIKE DENIAU'S.

4. IF CRACKS BEGIN TO APPEAR IN THE SOLID FRONT OF THE
YAOUNDE ASSOCIATED AND COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIABLE STATES
AGAINST TRADE RECIPROCITY FOR THE EC, IT MAY BE NECESSARY
TO MAKE APPROACHES, IN THE LIGHT OF FRENCH TACTICS, TO
REMIND THE PARTIES INVOLVED OF THE U.S. POSITION ON THE
REVERSE PREFERENCE ISSUE. GREENWALD

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